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## **Senator Brown Co-Sponsors School Savings Bill**

*Bill supported by local school districts passes Senate*

**FRIDAY, May 2, 2003** – State Sen. Cameron S. Brown, R-Fawn River Township, joined local educators today in applauding the passage of a bill designed to reduce school costs and consolidate the collection of school data.

“Giving our local school districts the opportunity to trim unnecessary costs from their operating budgets is necessary in these tight fiscal times,” Brown said. “I am pleased to have co-sponsored this legislation to help simplify data collection so our local schools can concentrate on the important task of teaching our kids.”

Sen. Brown organized a meeting of superintendents from across the 16<sup>th</sup> Senate District in March to discuss their concerns with Andrew Henry, director of the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI). Following that meeting, the Senate Education Committee received similar testimony from school administrators across the state.

Based on this input, the Senate passed a bill (SB 365) to streamline CEPI.

Several local educators commended the bill’s passage. “CEPI’s mission to become the most comprehensive single source of information regarding Michigan’s public schools is closer to becoming a reality,” said Roger Rathburn, Superintendent of Three Rivers Community Schools. “This legislation will help school districts reduce costs...at a time when districts are functioning with limited resources.”

CEPI is responsible for collecting and reporting school district data that is required by the Michigan Department of Education, the state Legislature and the federal government. Examples of the data include student demographics and school safety information.

Currently, student data is required to be submitted by schools to numerous state organizations, including CEPI.

Because of the volume of reporting requirements to multiple agencies, some school employees have been pulled off other important tasks including direct classroom instruction in order to meet the reporting demands. School districts have also had the added expense of purchasing new computer software.

“I fully support moving the data reporting and collection to one location,” said Bob Redmond, Superintendent of Branch Intermediate School District. “This will be good for schools and good for the state. However, we do need to make sure that funding is adequate for the Center to perform its role.”

The bill requires that all data submissions will now be made directly to CEPI.